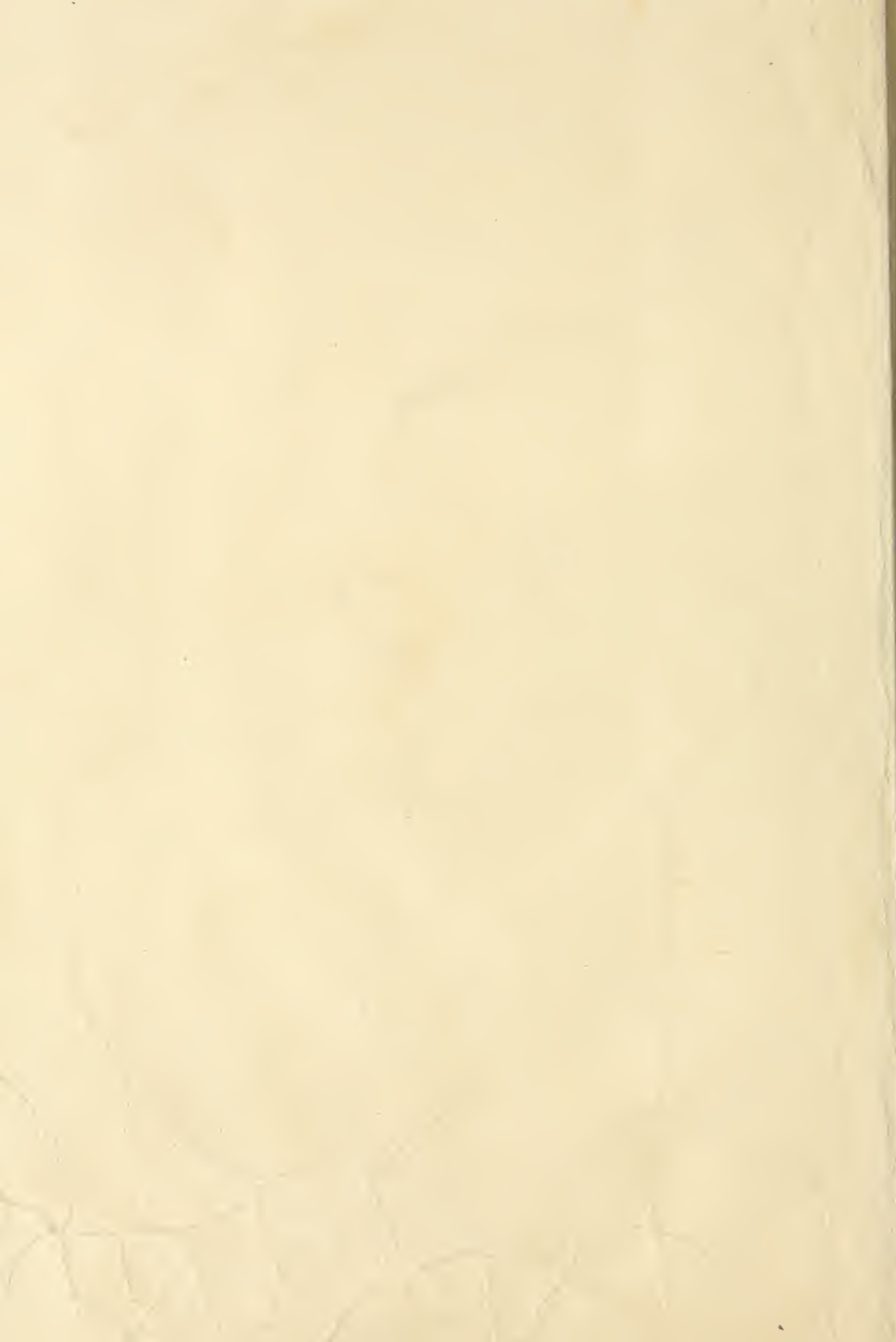
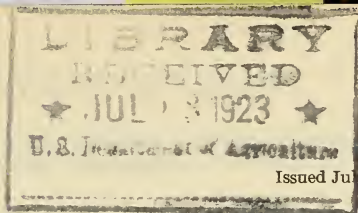


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United States Department of Agriculture.

BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS.

SERVICE AND REGULATORY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

No. 75.

(AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS.)

OFFICIAL WOOL STANDARDS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR GRADES OF WOOL.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS,
Washington, D. C., May 7, 1923.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY:

Attached I am sending you a set of standards for grades of wool. These are to become effective July 1, 1923, if they meet with your approval.

The proposed grades have been under consideration for many months, have been subjected to extensive grading tests in the field, have been discussed with other workers in the department interested in wool, and have been presented to meetings of representatives from the different branches of the wool industry, which have indorsed them and recommended their adoption. The proposed standards have also been submitted to the solicitor and have been accepted by him.

Very respectfully,

HENRY C. TAYLOR,
Chief of Bureau.

1. PUBLIC NOTICE ESTABLISHING OFFICIAL WOOL STANDARDS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR GRADES OF WOOL.

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Secretary of Agriculture by section 19 of the United States warehouse act, approved August 11, 1916 (39 United States Statutes at Large, pp. 446, 486); amended July 24, 1919 (41 United States Statutes at Large, pp. 234, 266); amended February 23, 1923, I, Henry C. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, do hereby establish, promulgate, and give public notice of standards for grades of wool effective July 1, 1923, as follows:

OFFICIAL WOOL STANDARDS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR GRADES OF WOOL.

For the purposes of these standards:

SECTION 1. GRADE FINE.—Fine shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is not greater than the sample marked "Fine" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 2. GRADE ONE-HALF BLOOD.—One-half Blood shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is greater than the sample marked "Fine" but not greater than the sample marked "One-half Blood" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 3. GRADE THREE-EIGHTHS BLOOD.—Three-eighths Blood shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is greater than the sample marked "One-half Blood" but not greater than the sample marked "Three-eighths Blood" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 4. GRADE ONE-FOURTH BLOOD.—One-fourth Blood shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is greater than the sample marked "Three-eighths Blood" but not greater than the sample marked "One-fourth Blood" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 5. GRADE LOW ONE-FOURTH BLOOD.—Low One-fourth Blood shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is greater than the sample marked "One-fourth Blood," but not greater than the sample marked "Low One-fourth Blood" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 6. GRADE COMMON.—Common shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is greater than the sample marked "Low One-fourth Blood," but not greater than the sample marked "Common" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 7. GRADE BRAID.—Braid shall be wool which in diameter of fiber is greater than the sample marked "Common" and which approximates the sample marked "Braid" of a series of samples in the custody of the United States

Department of Agriculture in the District of Columbia in a container marked "Original Official Wool Standards of the United States, Grades."

SECTION 8. For the purposes of grading: Wool in the fleece shall be designated by the grade of the largest proportion of the fibers of the fleece.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of the Department of Agriculture to be affixed in the City of Washington this 18th day of May, 1923.



Henry C. Wallace

Secretary of Agriculture.

WOOL STANDARDS.

The establishment of the standards herein defined is a result of investigations conducted by the Department of Agriculture in the development of standards for the principal value-determining properties of wool. These properties, or factors, are: (1) Diameter of fiber, (2) length of fiber, (3) spinning quality of fiber, and (4) shrinkage of wool. Since there is a more or less consistent relation between fineness of wool and the variations in the other factors, diameter of fiber is regarded as basic, and, in the investigations conducted, has been given primary consideration.

STANDARDS A NECESSITY.

The advisability of having standards for agricultural products is no longer a debatable point. Widened markets have placed a limitation on the personal contact once necessarily existing between buyer and seller. By providing a common language between the parties to a transaction and by making possible an understanding as to the precise character, quality, and condition of a product, standards facilitate trading and tend to diminish or eliminate the necessity of purchase by inspection or by sample.

The need for wool standards has long been recognized. Prior to the time when the Department of Agriculture was in position to undertake the wool standardization work, suggestions were received from several large organizations that the department take steps to create standards for wool and to issue copies of such standards for use in commerce. During the World War the lack of wool standards was especially noticeable. Government contracts for materials made wholly or partly of wool were, in the matter of the specifications for the wool, interpretable in terms only of the varied and arbitrary standards then in use. In consequence, difficulty was experienced not only in writing specifications, but in obtaining concurrence of opinion as to their interpretation. Likewise, in the work engaged in by this department looking to the improvement of wool marketing practices, it has repeatedly been found that wool standards are a requisite to its fullest attainment.

DEVELOPMENT OF WOOL STANDARDS.

The efforts made by the Department of Agriculture to develop standards for wool have met with hearty indorsement and approval. When the work was undertaken dealers and manufacturers cooperated willingly by supplying samples of wool representing their ideas of market grades. The samples supplied were, in most instances, of the types actually used by the houses submitting them. In this way many hundreds of samples, embracing the many market grades, were collected for the department's use.

These samples were later assembled, examined, and studied by experts in the employ of the department. Representative staples were drawn from the samples, compared with others of the same stated grade, classified according to the diameter of the fibers, and mounted. A study of these classified samples revealed a pronounced overlapping of the grades and showed none of the grades or standards then existent to be acceptable to the trade as a whole.

Another classification of the samples was made in which all were arranged according to diameter of fiber, regardless of grade specified. By elimination of duplicates the number of samples representing the range in diameter of fiber, in almost equal gradations from the finest to the coarsest, was reduced to 26.

A subclassification divided the range covered by the 26 samples into seven sections of approximately equal scope. A set of samples, duplicating the specimens of maximum diameter of fiber in each of the seven groups, was prepared and set up as a possible means of defining the lines of demarcation for the seven primary market grades.

On completion of the preliminary work the set of type samples was submitted to a number of wool and textile authorities called in conference to consider the proposed grades. As the reaction of the conference was favorable to the grades recommended, preparation of copies of the original set was begun. These sets, mounted in cabinets, and accompanied by appropriate descriptive matter and a table of measurements for a suggested classification of the grades according to length of staple, were made available for release as the "Tentative Wool Grades" of the Department of Agriculture.

INVESTIGATIONS.

Investigations to determine the practicability of the Tentative Wool Grades were conducted by (1) grading wool according to the Tentative Wool Grades, (2) submitting sets of the Tentative Wool Grades to authorities for criticism, (3) providing sets for use in demonstrational and educational work, and (4) holding public hearings for the discussion of the proposed grades.

During the shearing seasons of 1920, 1921, and 1922, several expert wool classifiers were engaged by the department in cooperation with the marketing bureaus and other agencies of a number of States to test the Tentative Wool Grades in actual grading work. Several million pounds of wool were thus graded and sold on the basis of the grades made.

In order that those who were directly connected with the handling of wool in the markets might be given an opportunity to study the proposed grades and submit their opinions of them, sets of the Tentative Wool Grades were sent to a number of wool dealers, wool manufacturers and others, with the following letter of transmittal:

A set of Tentative Wool Grades is being sent to you for your examination and criticism, as it is assumed that you are interested in the wool standardization work being done by this department and that you will cooperate with it in its effort to bring about a greater uniformity in wool grades and wool grading.

The Tentative Wool Grades are the proposed wool grade standards for the United States. They were formulated some time ago after a study had been

made of the wool grades used in the principal markets of the country. For this study hundreds of dealers and manufacturers, at the request of the department, submitted samples of the grades used by them, or samples representing their ideas of the various market grades. A classification of these samples was subsequently made and became the basis for the Tentative Wool Grades.

Investigations to determine the practicability of the Tentative Wool Grades are being made. Considerable field work has been done in which large quantities of wool were graded according to the proposed grades. Many lots of the wool so graded have been followed to the terminal markets in order to ascertain the reaction of the purchasers on them. Supplementing these investigations, sets of the Tentative Wool Grades are now being sent to wool dealers and wool manufacturers in order that an opportunity may be given them to examine and criticize the grades before final standards are established.

The set being sent to you is similar to those heretofore distributed or used in field work. Please examine it and feel free to give your comments on it. If your general comments are not along the lines of the following questions, it would be appreciated if your reply would contain answers to them:

1. In your opinion is it feasible to have wool grade standards based on definite grade lines as shown in the Tentative Wool Grades? Do you think the samples in the set show what it has been attempted to show, namely, the maximum diameter of fiber advisable to include in the respective grades?

2. Have you any suggestions to make regarding terms used, the classes given, or the staple lengths shown in the table printed inside the cover of the box?

3. Would you buy wool graded according to the Tentative Wool Grades and suggested classes?

Not all of the replies contained answers to the foregoing questions; a tabulation of the replies according to the attitude toward the grades is therefore given:

Complete indorsement --- 65 per cent	Noncommittal----- 7 per cent
Qualified indorsement---- 24 per cent	Opposed ----- 4 per cent

Sets of the Tentative Wool Grades were sent on request to agricultural colleges, woolgrowers' associations, textile schools, wool-testing houses, wool and textile publications, banks in wool-growing and wool-marketing centers, agricultural extension workers, and others interested in wool and wool grading. From reports made to the department, the majority of the sets are in active use in presenting or demonstrating wool grades and wool grading. Their distribution is not only general throughout the United States, but on special request sets have been sent to Hawaii, Argentina, Australia, Czechoslovakia, Japan, South Africa, New Zealand, and Poland.

PUBLIC HEARINGS.

At the close of the field investigations in 1922 preparations were made for holding the public hearings on the Tentative Wool Grades so that final determination of the standards might be made. Hearings were therefore arranged for and held in Boston, Mass., November 21, 1922; Philadelphia, Pa., November 23, 1922; Chicago, Ill., December 6, 1922; and in Washington, D. C., February 6, 1923. At these hearings, which were attended by producers, dealers, manufacturers, and others, the work accomplished was reviewed, the proposed grades and purposes of the work discussed, and criticism and suggestions invited. Indorsements of the grades were received from representatives of several branches of the industry and recommendations were made that the Tentative Wool Grades be declared official.

At the final hearing held in Washington the Tentative Wool Grades were indorsed and their establishment as standards according to American nomenclature was recommended by the Joint Committee on Research and Standardization, representing the National Association of Wool Manufacturers, by the American Association of Wool and Worsted Manufacturers, and by the National Association of Worsted Yarn Spinners. This committee further recommended that the department consult with authorities of the British wool and textile industries to the end that a correlation of the United States and British classifications could be effected, and a system of nomenclature worked out that would take cognizance of the wool, amounting to approximately 60 per cent of our consumption that is now imported.

FURTHER STANDARDIZATION WORK.

Since much finer distinctions must necessarily be made in wool for manufacturing purposes than are possible or essential in grading wool in the fleece, the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Research and Standardization will be followed and an effort made to develop a classification that recognizes the greater number of grades employed in the manufacturing industry.

Further steps in the standardization work are: (1) Development of a standard terminology for length, on which some progress has been made; (2) development of standards for spinning qualities of the fiber; and (3) development of standards for describing or indicating the shrinkage, degree of foreign matter, etc., in wool.

As these standards are developed their promulgation will follow.

